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ABSTRACT

The poems in this anthology were written by students in the Josiah Quincy Elementary School in Boston, Massachusetts. The students were participants in a Federally funded special arts project, TryArts, which sought to stimulate self-expression by exposing children to professional artists and performers and by involving them in the creative process. The children whose poems appear in this anthology worked with Ricardo Alonzo, TryArts poet-in-residence. (MK)

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ED197016

I AM SORRY I BUSTED YOUR WINDOW

POEMS

BY

QUINCY SCHOOL

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Edited by RICARDO ALONSO

Preface

Since January of 1978, poet in residence, Ricardo Alonso, has been working with students at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School as part of Tri-Arts, a federally funded arts project operating this year in five Boston schools. Once of the aims of the project is to stimulate self expression by exposing children to professional artists and performers and by involving them in the creative process at a crucial stage in the development of their young minds and imaginations.

Out of the imaginations of the Quincy's young has come a self expression—a poetry profound in its simplicity, startling in its wisdom, and captivating in its magic. But the poems anthologized here speak so well for themselves that I need say little about them. I would like instead to take this opportunity to offer words of praise and gratitude to Ricardo Alonso who led the workshops that produced these poems. A gifted poet himself, Ricardo is a master at inspiring others.

Our thanks go also the Louise McCoy, principal of the Quincy Elementary for the opportunity to work in her school, to the teachers of the Quincy for their interest and support, and to Alfreda Piecuch and Margaret Krell, our in-school coordinators, for their tireless efforts on behalf of the Tri-Arts Project.

Ann duCille
Project Director

Introduction

Children's poetry is an invention of adults.

I remember a pupil I once had, Carlos Vasquez, a fifth grade student at Lawrence's Tarbox School. He and his classmates gave a poetry reading at the Lawrence YWCA. Carlos is small, he arrived that day with a fresh crew cut, dressed in his summer best. He was a quiet type of child, with an easy smile. He stood before a group of adults, smiling ladies and gentlemen, and began to read:

For me life is like a jail
a jail is like a clock
The wars are like people running
For me apples are like stones
arms are like snakes
running is like jumping off a cliff
For me stars are like headaches
For me pennies are like a million dollars
For me sneezing is like dying

The smiles in the crowd dissolved. Eyebrows arched up. Looks said: "Poor boy." What did they expect to hear?

Children are not interested in "children's poetry." Nonsense, repetitive rhyme bores them, as it would bore anyone else. On the other hand, children like a poem that carries itself clearly, that paints a situation that is close to life. And they respond to poetry that adults may consider "above their heads."

Don't think of this anthology as "children's poetry," think of it as universal. There are voices here that are speaking for the first time outside the realm of daydreams. There are all sorts of poems here, many eyes at many levels of sophistication. This anthology was not meant to showcase the "stars", rather to be representative of the effort that all made. The value of the experience is not in seeing your poem in print, but in the tumult of creating it.

There is a growing trend toward placing artists in in-school programs, working directly at teaching children their craft. Nothing could be more necessary. There is nothing superfluous, nothing that is wasted in doing this. Stimulating creativity in children and providing channels for its expression are essential in forming well-balanced, intelligent adults. Working with poetry, for example, awakens a new interest in language on the part of children. Here is something to use words for other than a spelling quiz or book report. Librarians also find that their poetry section, usually pretty dusty, now starts doing a brisk business.

For the artist, the experience of working in a school can be frustrating. It is always draining. But all things taken into account, it represents a renewal. When a third grade class grasps with matter-of-fact clarity, the subtleties of a haiku poem, or the hoarse earthiness of Langston Hughes' blues, nothing could make

you happier. You skip lunch and leave the school humming a song. Why consign poets to the fringes of society or the vaults of academia? Why consign children to the "creativity" of television? Why perpetuate useless myths about art and how it is made? The children at the Josiah Quincy School know the correct answer to the question: Who can write a poem?

Anyone can.

Ricardo Alonso
Poet-in-Residence
Josiah Quincy School, Boston
May 23, 1978

8

I'm sorry I busted your window
I took a big rock
and aimed at your window
I threw the rock at your window
It broke the glass
and I'm sorry

Danny McClain
Ungraded
Ms. Davis

For me life is like a jail
A jail is like I am a bird
singing in a cage, everywhere
And people say
"Look at that beautiful singing bird"
And then they toss bread crumbs everywhere
and then they let me out of my cage
I can go anywhere
like in the city or town
or to find another, new bird cage

Howard Lee
Grade 4
Ms. Grant

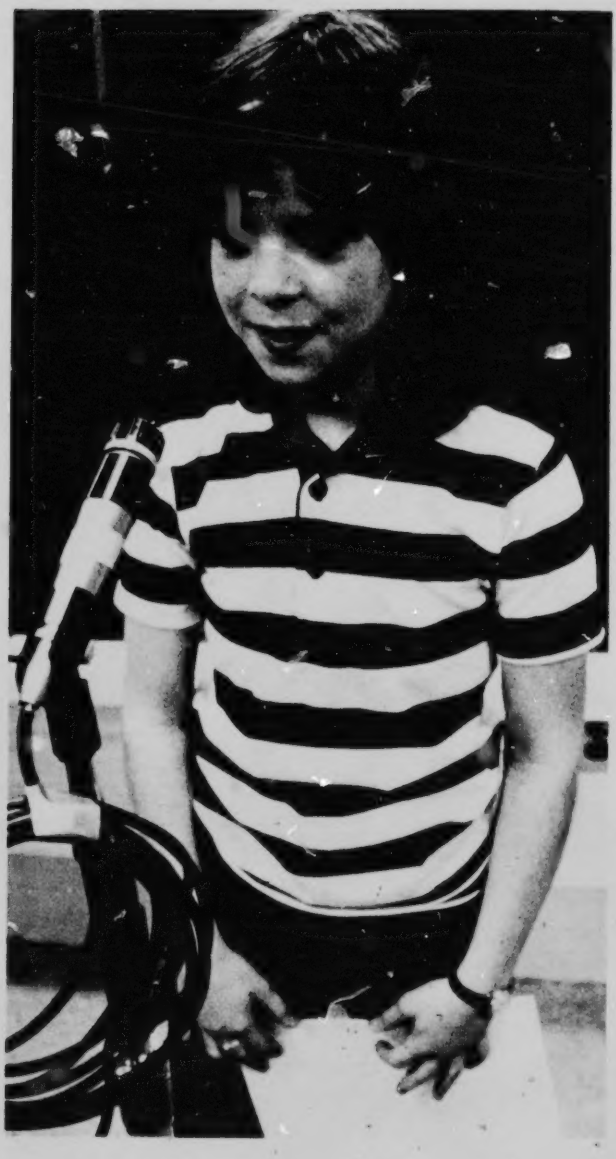
For me life is like a
BOOK
full of different things
Different people
Different words
People I have never met
words I haven't seen before

Harrison Bourne
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

Trees and the sun.
One day a man has a garden
He loved his garden and flowers
And he had a daughter
They grew some fresh corn
because they lived on a farm
They had a dog that messed up their garden

The little girl had
a bad dream
that she would die
And she had bad dreams
And she wrote poems
to read to her father
She dreamed that she would die
And she died
And her father cried and cried

Catherine Hollins
Grade 4
Ms. Temple



The Fields

The fields
flowing
green

Flowers
dotting the ground
growing

A horse
quietly swishing its tail
neighing softly

The birds
in the
field

Just soaring
through the
air

Sarah Burnes
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

Kite

My kite is flying
high in the sky
running in the breeze
pulling me along the meadow

Running Horse

One day a horse
came racing down my road
In New Hampshire it was fall
leaves were falling down

The horse was brown

The Sun

The sun is setting, the sun is coming up
Over the mountain
the red and yellow sky

Madeline Belliveau
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

The soft music
like a moth fluttering on the guitar
dying slowly
The sound of a piano
like a bluejay screeching
The sound of drums
just like big raindrops falling
on the roof of a car
The sound of a flute
like the sound of the wind
blowing through the cracked plaster
The sound of the bells
like the sound of a stick
falling on a kettle

Kate Kelley
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

Two Poems

I would like to go swimming
all alone where it is quiet
I would like to go outside
and ride the horse
all by myself

My birthday is May 22, 1978
I sat in the garden
and I looked at the sky
I saw a person riding a horse

Catherine Wardell
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

11

12

20

For me life is like a drag
because I get beatings from my sister
because my sister calls me names
because girls do not play with me
That is life
I have no friends, not Gwen?
I have to go to bed at 6:00.

Charity McNeil
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

Lonely Boy

He is one of the lonely boys
He always has to be with the girls
He can't come with us
He often has to stay at home
He is very pretty
He is not a liar
He does his work on time but he can't play
He only has a small family
In New Year's he gets a little money
He's a good student
He's in Grade 5, he likes fishes
He cares about his friends a lot
He is a good boy
but sometimes he gets mean as a tiger
When he's not mad, he's as beautiful as a rabbit
He likes the teacher very much
He never fights, but if he has to, he will
He likes to listen to songs
He's a lonely boy

Phillip Wong
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

Jesus be my fence

Jesus be my fence
around me every day
Jesus I want you to protect me
from the devil
that travels along this way
Lord, I know you can
Lord, I know you will
Fight my battles, only if I keep still
Be my fence around me every day

Lawrence Short
Ungraded
Ms. Davis

The Beat

I play the beat
I got to sleep
and I get up in the morning
and I hear the beat
and I go to school
and I come back home
and I go back to sleep
I woke up one day
I didn't hear the beat
I'm going to keep searching
but till then
I'll go back to sleep

Bernard Brown
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

The sun shines brighter and brighter
I feel warm all over
I meet people all over the world
I share things
day after day without stopping
But no one seems to care
I can't help it
things come to me like mad
But when it comes to the end
I'll be there
believe me
I'll be there

Jay Hughes
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

What are the blues?

blues blues
blues are blue like
the blue hills
blues are like
gray blue paints
blues are like blue clouds
singing tunes singing tunes
singing tunes

Shahid Arkeen
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

The big brown trees
full of coconuts
And the men
climb the trees
to pick coconuts
It's Thursday
And the big bright sun
shining over the trees

Travis Pettus
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

One day I had
a dog But it was just
a small dog, it was
just a little puppy
And my dog had some friends
but I came home and
called my dog then
he didn't come so
I went back in my
room, my mom said that
my dog is dead

Giovanni McLemore
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

Going back, so many things to remember
The things that happened
three years ago in September
Who did I see?
Someone familiar
Someone I knew from before
That person was coming towards me
running out of the door
I remembered her, she was so friendly
hand-in-hand we walked away
The sun was still hanging in the sky
the same old place I knew before

Maria Striar
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

The River

The river is moving
On the river there is a movement, slow
A boat is moving
slow, slow, slow
and around and
around, around
Somebody is fishing
Somebody is walking
along the river

So Lin Chiu
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

Haiku

Skateboard wheel
rolling on the ground
without any sound

The roaring of a motor cycle
makes me can't hear
voices of birds

David Kwan
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

A stormy day,
thundering, a darkness
and a heavy rain.

Mei Ling Chan
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

My Mother

A flower is like my mother
bright and gay
Sometimes mad, sometimes gray

Steven Johnson
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

Spring

Spring, season of friendliness
Flowers blooming
Showers bringing old memories back

Siu Mun Wong
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

Trees

Trees are the kindest things I know
They do no harm
They simply grow

Yiba Ng
Grade 4
Ms. Grant

For me life is like
I do things sometimes.
OK, do dishes. Do my room.
Sweep floors. Do the bathroom.
Wake up 7:00 o'clock in the morning.
Wash up myself. Clean the kitchen.
Wake up my mother. Do my sister's room.
Wake up my sisters.
I hate that stuff.
I'll be playing outside when I'm finished.
Waiting for the slow bus.

Loretta Waters
Grade 4
Ms. Grant

Lies

I cannot write
I cannot read
I am mute
I am deaf
I cannot eat
I cannot walk
I cannot draw
I cannot paint
I cannot sing
I cannot dance
I cannot play the piano
I cannot play the drum

Siu Wai Wong
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

Disappear

As I look up in the air
I see birds fly around
and at once they land

As I walk in the woods
I see foxes looking at me
and at once they disappear

One day I was flying in the air
and I came down in a flash
and caught me a rabbit
that was jumping up and down

I was walking in the woods
and I saw a lion
I ran and hid behind a tree
the lion ran after me
I remembered I could fly
and never came back

I was in my house
when I saw a flash
It was a rat
I ran in my room
and got a shoe
and killed it
and buried it

Mariana Rivera
Grade 5
Mr. Cullity

There was a cat in a picture
and the cat was
as pretty as he could be
And people loved him
He loved the man that had bought him
And he sat
up in the picture
and dreamed

Catherine Hollins
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

Haiku

Heading for the sea
the waves crash, as if a storm
the fish stir, the sky is dark

The seagull flies
it drops its wings
it screeches out its voice

Kate Kelley
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

The Lake

I could still remember the lake,
it was blue;
I can see the fishes splashing.

Eileen Ng
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

Sun shining
in the sky
and the waves blast in the seashore
and a lonesome little crab
trying to pick its way through the sand
and I'm just sitting
like a rock on the seat of an island
just staring and gazing
at the blueish blanket we call
sea

Britt Anderson
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

I Can Hear and I Can See

I hear the birds sing
I see them fly
And I can also see them die

I see the sun shine
I see it glow
I also see it go

I see the children cry
I see them happy
I also see them grow

I see the rain coming down
I see it stop
I also see the rainbows.

Arline Ortiz
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

Two Poems

I am a sidewalk!?
I am a school!?
I am a birthday party!?
I am art!?
I am music!?
I am a barn!?
I am a bell!?
I am a pie!?
I am a library!?
I am a watch!?

The drum beat goes boom, boom
The birds sing and flap their wings
I love to be there, I love to be there

Jose Montezuma
Ungraded
Ms. Davis

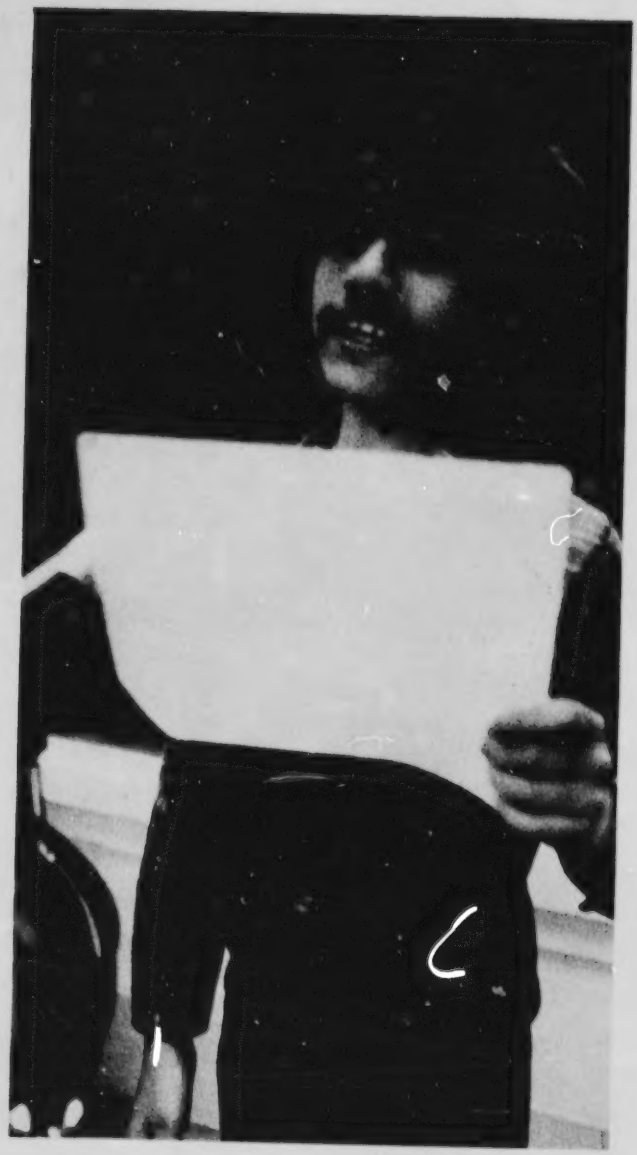
Three Moods

The city is crowded
Smog in the air
Litter in the street
Loud cars on the highway
The roar of a passing train
The sound of a jet flying
The buildings blocking the sky
The city

The sky is gray
Fog hiding the tops of buildings
Air is moist with dew
A feeling of loneliness settles on me

The sun
Breaking through the fog
The tops of buildings appear
The air dries up
The world comes alive

Albert Choy
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg



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Haiku

A tree alone
along a bird comes
flapping its wings

The sun, big and bright
Now it is gone
It's night

The star in the night
you see
It's hanging in darkness

A piece of paper, blank and neat
along comes wind
blows it in the street

Winston Danwah
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

Wind

Where have you been?
I looked for you all night, wind
tired and tired.
You're gone with the clouds,
no one could call you to stay.
You can go wherever you want, oh wind.
I wonder where you were last night, everyday.
Oh, wind, I want to be like you
flying on top of people's heads.
Oh wind, you are so lucky.

Michael Lou
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

The moon is so full of holes
pieces falling off
dust that never moves

Michael Conway
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

The city like a stuck horn
The country like a pencil sitting quietly
The Milky Way like a soft cloud

David McNelley
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

People running
Rumbling feet
Running dogs

Jennifer Chin
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

I'm eating my school!
I'm eating Boston!
I'm eating the snow!
I ate the world!
Delicious mmmmmmmmm
mmmmmmmmmmmmm
I ate the sun. Hot.
I ate the universe.
Burpp

Robert Snowden
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

For me life is like . . .
like a joyful clown
like a sad turtle

For me life is like . . .
like an apple
people picking on me

For me life is like a dog chasing a cat
For me life is like a sun burning me

Jennifer Chin
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

One bird
flew away
from the catch of a man
trying to get freedom
by flying away
But he got shot by a hunter
Poor bird he is

David So
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Mrs. Chu

Looking

I see nothing
everybody's gone
and I'm alone
and locked in the school
And it's dark inside
and nothing to do
and the chalkboard is clean
and the room is empty

David Mak
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

It's tall!
It's skinny!
It's handsome!
It's got a lot of money!

It's my father!

Kenneth Walker
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

I saw a
Trans Am with hot rod
Everything I ever dreamed
Trans Am!
Hot rod!
Trans Am!

Edward Cruz
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

Where have you been? Where have you been?
I've been out
looking for something to eat
that's where
I've been OK, yes
I was finding some food, for us to eat
Where is your father?
He is at work
That's where my father is at
he don't be home this late
The boy said, he is at his girlfriend's house
No he's not
Yes he is
The boy got smacked in his face
He was crying
She said, "Stop crying,"
"'fore I smack you again and again"
He said, "No, you won't"
She had smacked him again and again
His father had come in
and she had said, "Where have you been?"
"I've been out somewhere, OK?"
"Yes"

Deevon Young
3rd Grade
Ms. De Witt

Music

It echoes through your ears
you feel like just going to sleep
but instead you sit
and gaze at the sky
stars, moon and all
just thinking about life

You look around as if you were hipnotized
You stare in such a way
as if you were
in another world
Thinking you should go to sleep
you just sit there
with nothing on your mind
and finally fall asleep

Sleeping in a way
dreaming about music
While a cat comes
and falls asleep on top of you

Maria Striar
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

Memories

. . . of people
like my aunt
leaving back to California
On a nice cool summer night
my uncle leaving with her

Memories of the summer
jumping rope in the hot sun with
my feet burning too

Sophie Goon
3rd Grade
Ms. De Wire

Haiku

Alone, alone in the dark
no one to talk to
no one to be with. Alone.

Bruce Owens
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

64

How do you feel
when you have
the whole road?

Nezer Porter
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

For me life is like
riding a bike in the sun
as the wind blows
And everything around me
nice
and peaceful
and enjoyable

For me life is like
watching the birds
flying in the air
and having a good time together

For me life is like
having someone to play with
and just having
a wonderful time

Crystal Bentley
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

59

60

I live in the forest
At night it is very quiet
and then I like to watch the animals sleep

I live in the forest
In the daytime it is very noisy
I have all kinds of animal friends

I live in the forest
I have friends, they are bears
I take them to my house
and give them bread and honey

Joseph Harris
Ungraded
Ms. Davis

Where have you been little girl?
You're just a little girl
I went to the store
—me and my friend—
and we went to the playground
I saw a little bird in the tree
it was little like me
And I saw a dog
it was big
I ran home and
oh, I saw a cat with big paws
and Mother, that was the end of everything
See the moon
See the sun
See the clouds

Paula Bannister
Grade 4
Ms. Grant

In my mind
my grandfather in his coffin
just laying there
while everybody
is crying
The next day
we all went to the funeral
Everybody brought flowers
and put them on the coffin
to let it look better than bare

Dionne Hughes
Grade 5
Mr. Cullity

Life is like for me:
an empty can making a lot of noise
Life is like for me:
a pipe that cannot go.
Life is like for me:
a car that's out of gas
Life is like for me:
a flea living in a dog
Life is like for me:
a cat that can't climb
Life is like for me:
a rat that don't know how to run
Life is like for me:
a sun that don't shine

Kevin Campbell
Grade 4
Ms. Grant

An old man is very poor
and lonely too
And no friends, no places to live
Walking around on the street
moaning around for food
If he finds something good to eat
he will eat it like a hungry cat

Raina Yee
4th & 5th Bi-lingual
Ms. Chu

My Lost Cat

She has been lost for days
but it has seemed like years
I am lonely
and she is probably
cold and hungry
And I have no way of knowing
But I wish I had her
Everything seems lonely and cold
Nothing is right
I cannot sleep at night

Sonia Brathwaite
Grade 5
Ms. Jordan/Mr. Lindberg

My Uncle

Here we sit, my uncle and I
playing checkers and drinking milk
Then he leaves me
and comes back
Then he leaves me again
and went to sleep
never to come back again

Leslie Hill

My Cousin Keva

I remember my cousin,
She was nice.
Her name was Keva.
She was only three.
She fell on a piece of glass
That went in her side,
She went to the hospital
And there she died.
I can remember her clearly,
Beautiful and nice,
She looked like her mother
And she reminded me of my brother.
The glass had to kill her,
But she had to go somehow.
Why wasn't it someone else?
Love as I remember.
Please, my Lord, bring her back,
My sweet cousin, Keva Hines.

Michael Hines
Grade 5
Ms. Angelo

A
tall Mountain
in the summertime
and tall country trees
that raise
their leafy
bodies up over the horizon
trying to touch the birds
and trying to touch freedom
and birds which build
their brown nests of sticks
in the trees' hair
and squirrels that climb upon them

Britt Anderson
3rd Grade
Ms. Ford

70

I wonder why there is so much
that I can see and I can touch
but cannot ever understand

May Eng
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

72

Morning Time

In the morning the sun shines
Morning is an early time
In the morning I hear the rooster crow

May Sum Chu
Grade 2
Ms. Lin

A Tree

I saw little leaves on a tree
Next week I saw yellow flowers
The flowers died
And apples came out of the tree

Cathy Jew
Grade 2
Ms. Chan

S ring

Spring is life
brings life to many people
Spring brings flowers
brings new life to old people

Patricia White
Grade 2
Ms. Mills

Poem

One night I saw a man
He looked strange
He was very tall
and he was looking at me
His eyes were strange
and his name was Joe
And he had black shoes on
and a black suit
He looked like my father
And it was my father

Christine Hennessey
Grade 2
Ms. Mills

Night

I feel something [illegible] my mind
it feels like a rock
Then I go to bed

Freedom

I run away
I don't have any food
I don't have anything to drink

Jeremiah Trafford
Grade 2
Ms. Shapiro

The Moon and the Trees

When the moon is up
The trees are full of darkness
The wind is whistling

Phoebe Millon
Grade 2
Ms. Shapiro

Heaven

T[illegible]ed up to heaven
goes up, up, up
in the sky

Amand[illegible] Lydon
Grade 2
Ms. Shapiro

Poem

The sun is shining
The bee is stinging
And the egg is cracked

Cheryldene Bobbit
Sonya Robinson
Grade 2
Ms. Knox

Poem

The sun is like the moon
The clouds are like the sky
The lake is like an ocean
My sister is quiet
Water is like rain
A chair is like wood
Kissing is like love
Crayons are like colors

Sandra Hennessey
Cariel Wilkinson
Grade 2
Ms. Knox

Two Poems

The sky is always blue
But is is white
When clouds are busy raining

When the winter snow comes
The summer sun will go away
While the snow freezes and freezes

Edward Chan
Grade 2
Ms. Lin

Poem

The wind blows the bushes
sometimes fast
sometimes slow
Sometimes the clouds move
some'imes it rains

William Simmon
Grade 2
Ms. Knox

Freedom

I used to have a butterfly
And I let it go
I like it

Herman Chin
Grade 2
Ms. Chan

Summer

In the summer
the flowers open
So pretty

Heung Wah Chiu
Grade 2
Ms. Lin

Credits

TITLE

Danny McClain
Ungraded
Ms. Davis

COVER DRAWING

Seth Trafford
Grade 4
Ms. Temple

PHOTOGRAPHS

Alfreda Piecuch
Tri-Arts Coordinator
Quincy School

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Cooperating agencies

The Artists Foundation (Artists in Residence Program)

The Cultural Education Collaborative,

ARTS/Boston

 "END OF DOCUMENT"